

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: PSI LEADER EXPLAINS BID FOR BILATERAL CONSULATATIONS

1. SUMMARY. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF AND NEWSPAPER INTERVIEWS, ITALIAN SOCIALIST PARTY (PSI) VICE SECRETARY ENRICO MANCA HAS INDICATED THAT PSI CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER PARTIES ARE MEANT TO LEAD TO NEW GOVERNING MAJORITY INCLUDING BOTH PSI AND ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI). PROPOSED NEW MAJORITY WOULD SUPPORT RE-EDITION OF ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT MADE UP OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS (DC), LEFTIST (PCI AND PSI-ORIENTED) TECHNOCRATS AND PERHAPS SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (PSDI) AND REPUBLICANS (PRI). IN OTHER COMMENTS, MANCA SUGGESTED THAT WOUNDS OPENED AT JULY 1976 PSI CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING BETWEEN FORMER PARTY SECRETARY FRANCESCO DE MARTINO AND SOME OF HIS YOUNGER FOLLOWERS LED BY MANCA HAD

BEEN HEALED, AND THAT A DE MARTINO-MANCA ALLIANCE NOW IS STRONGEST PSI INTERNAL FORCE. IF TRUE, THIS WOULD POSE
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LARGE PROBLEMS FOR PARTY SECRETARY BETTINO CRAXI. END SUMMARY.

2. PSI VICE SECRETARY MANCA STATED IN FEBRUARY 22 MEETING WITH EMBOFF AND IN NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW THAT THE PSI NOW REALIZES THAT ITS GOAL OF A "GOVERNMENT OF EMERGENCY" (ONE INCLUDING THE DC AND ALL OF THE ABSTAINING PARTIES) IS PRESENTLY UNOBTAINABLE. THE

DC, SAID MANCA, CANNOT ACCEPT THE PCI IN THE GOVERNMENT AND LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS FOR THE EUROPEAN PALIAMENT AND FOR A SUCCESSOR TO ITALIAN PRESIDENT LEONE (BOTH IN 1978). THE MINORITY ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT IS NOT, HOWEVER, CAPABLE OF PROMOTING THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORDS NECESSARY TO SOLVE ITALY'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. IN ADDITION, THE INFLUENCE OF THE SMALLER APRITES IS DECLINING AS THEY ARE INCREASINGLY IGNORED BY BOTH THE DC AND PCI. MANCA WAS THE AUTHOR OF THE PSI'S PROPOSAL FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OTHER PARTIES. HE MADE THE PROPOSAL IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE SEARCH FOR A NEW MAJORITY AND A NEW GOVERNMENT FORMULA.

3. MANCA TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE PSI WILL PRESENT TO THE DC IN THE MACH 2 DC-PSI MEETING A PROPOSAL THAT "WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR THE DC TO REFUSE." THE PSI WILL THEN MEET WITH THE PCI (MARCH 4). AND WITH THE SMALL LAY PARITES (BEGINNING ABOUT MARCH 8). IN BROAD TERMS, THE PSI PROPOSAL IS FOR A "PROGRAMMATIC MAJORITY" WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ALL OF THE PRESENTLY ABSTAINING PARTIES PLUS THE DC. SUCH A MAJORITY WOULD SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT HEADED BY THE DC (RETAINING ANDREOTTI AS PM) AND INCLUDING LEFTIST TECHNOCRATS WHO WOULD PERFORM THE ROLE OF "GARANTI"--GUARANTORS--OF THE FIDELITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ITS PROGRAMMATIC COMMITMENTS. HE SAID THAT THESE "GARANTI" WOULD BE LEFTIST EQUIVALENTS OF MIN. FOR FOREIGN TRADE OSSOLA, I.E., PRESTIGIOUS TECHNOCRATS (SUCH AS ECONOMISTS AND CONFIDENTIAL

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JURISTS) IDENTIFIED WITH, BUT NOT POLITICAL EXPONENTS OF, THE PSI AND PCI. PRESS RUMORS HAVE IT THAT MANCA IS THINKING SPECIFICALLY OF PEOPLE LIKE ECONOMISTS GIORGIO RUFFOLO (LINKED TO PSI), LUIGI SPAVENTA AND CLAUDIO NAPOLEONI ("INDEPENDENT" PARLIAMENTARIANS ELECTED ON PCI LISTS). THE PRI AND PSDI WOULD BE FREE TO ENTER THE GOVERNMENT "IF LA MALFA AND ROMITA WISH".

4. COMMENT: MANCA SEEMS MORE SANGUINE ABOUT THE PSI'S PROSPECTS OF ACHIEVING DC ACCEPTANCE OF A MAJORITY INCLUDING THE PCI THAN CURRENT DC ATTITUDES WOULD APPEAR TO WARRANT. ALTHOUGH CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE DC MIGHT FIND A "PROGRAMMATIC" MAJORITY WITH THE PCI ACCEPTABLE, THE MAJORITY OF THE PARTY SEEEMS AT LEAST AS HOSTILE TO FORMAL ALLIANCES WITH THE PCI AS BEOFRE THE JUNE 1976 ELECTIONS. MANCA'S PROPOSAL WOULD SEEM, ON THE OTHER HAND, TO BE IN LINE WITH CURRENT PCI THINKING (SEE SOME 2663). PCI ECONOMIC

EXPERT GIORGIO NAPOLITANO IS REPORTED TO HAVE AIRED PROPOSAL SIMILAR TO MANCA'S IN CONVERSATION WITH AMERICAN JOURNALIST. IN THIS REGARD, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT MANCA IS GENERALLY CHARACTERIZED IN POLITICAL CIRCLES AS HAVING CLOSE TIES WITH THE PCI. THE NIEWS HE PRESENTED ON THIS OCCASION ARE ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT SHARED BY ALL SOCIALISTS, BUT MANCA SEEMS MOMENTARILY TO BE LEADING THE PARTY ON THIS ISSUE. BY ANNOUNCING HIS STRATEGY PUBLICLY IN ADVANCE, PERHAPS OUT OF OVERCONFIDENCE, MANCA MAY HAVE DECREASED HIS POLITICAL CHANCES OF SUCCESS. END COMMENT.

5. MANCA DESCRIBED THE PSI AS "ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERYZ ORGANIZATIONALLY AND SUPPORTED FOR THE FIRST TIME BY A FRIENDLY PRESS. HE AFFIRMED THAT THE RESULTS OF RECENT PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES (SEE ROME 2661) HAD REINFORCED WHAT HE CALLED THE "COLLEGIAL LEADERSHIP" OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARIAT. HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THE ADJECTIVE "COLLEGIAL," SAYING THAT PARTY SECRETARY CRAXI WAS ONLY A "PRIMUS INTER PARES," WITH NO MANDATE TO IMPOSE AN "AUTONOMIST" RIGHTWARD-LEANING POLITICAL LINE UPON THE PARTY. ANY ONE OF THE FIVE MEMBERS OF THE SECRETARIAT, MANCA CONTINUED, MIGHT BE PARTY SECRETARY, EVEN THOUGH CRAXI STILL HAD THE FIRM SUPPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT. THE MOST IMPORTANT RECENT INTERNAL PARTY DEVELOPMENT IS THE HEALING OF THE WOUNDS OPENED AT THE JULY 1976 CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING BETWEEN FORMER PARTY SECRETARY FRANCESCO DE MARTINO AND A GROUP OF HIS YOUNGER FOLLOWERS HEADED BY MANCA HIMSELF. (COMMENT: DE MARTINO WAS OUSTED AS PARTY SECRETARY BY A "REVOLT OF THE FORTY-YEAR OLDS" AT THE JULY 1976 MEETING. END COMMENT) THESE RENEWED TIES GAVE THE FOLLOWERS OF DE MARTINO AND MANCA A PLURALITY WITHIN THE PARTY AND IN THE SECRETARIAT.

6. COMMENT: MANCA'S EMPHASIS ON THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF TIES WITH DE MARTINO WAS FIRST-HAND CONFIRMATION OF SIMILAR REPORTS FROM OTHER SOURCES. MANCA DOES LITTLE TO CONCEAL HIS LACK OF REGARD FOR CRAXI, AND OBVIOUSLY FEELS THAT HE IS NOW IN A POSITION TO MANIPULATE CRAXI'S CHOICES AND TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR. THE PROPOSAL FOR BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, WON MORE OF LESS WILLING APPROVAL FROM CRAXI ONLY AFTER HAVING BEEN FLOATED BY MANCA PUBLICLY. MANCA'S TIES WITH THE PCI ARE WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED IN POLITICAL CIRCLES. DE MARTINO'S ENTHUSIASM FOR A RETURN OF THE PSI TO A GOVERNING ROLE IS ALSO NO SECRET. IF MANCA AND DE MARTINO COMBINE TO DICTATE THE PARTY'S SHORT-TERM CHOICES, PROSPECTS FOR THE REALIZATION OF CRAXI'S DREAM OF A PSI

INDEPENDENT OF THE PCI WILL BE CONSIDERABLY DIMMED.
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